



August 27, 2010

Statement of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of South Ossetia on the Second Anniversary of the Recognition of the Republic by the Russian Federation

Tskhinval, South Ossetia: Celebrations were held in South Ossetia Thursday to mark the second anniversary of the country's recognition of independence by the Russian Federation.

For the Republic of South Ossetia, August 26, 2008, was a significant milestone in the history of the South Ossetian people, following their twenty-year struggle for freedom and independence.

After Georgian troops attacked Tskhinval August 7-8, 2008, causing the death and injury of thousands of innocent civilians, Russia stepped in to stop further bloodshed and restore peace. The decision of the Russian leadership to recognize the independence of South Ossetia was the only way to ensure the safety of its people.

Russian-South Ossetian relations have a long and rich history. Our people are united by a spiritual and cultural closeness and a desire for close communication and cooperation. This has been true throughout time and has continued in spite of any historical fractures.

Over the past two years, the governments have worked hard to expand the official relationship between the Republic of South Ossetia and the Russian Federation. On September 17, 2008, the two governments signed a Treaty of Friendship, Cooperation and Mutual Assistance, which became the basis for further expansion of cooperative legal relations. To date, Russia and Ossetia have signed more than 30 interstate, intergovernmental and interdepartmental agreements in various fields. This includes bilateral agreements that allow Russia to post a military contingent in South Ossetia, providing security and stability for its citizens.

South Ossetia, demonstrating a policy of peace and good neighborliness, is prepared to develop relations with all countries based on principles of international law and mutual respect. Further strengthening of statehood, the improvement of democratic institutions and the revival of its socio-economic infrastructure are major priorities for the South Ossetian government and will provide for the safe return of those people seeking a peaceful and constructive life.

Unfortunately, in recent years, officials in Tbilisi have continued to make statements about preparations for "total defense" and have made threats against South Ossetia while presenting what is happening in the region inaccurately. Through this false portrayal of events, the Georgian

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authorities have attempted to shift blame for their problems onto the leaders of South Ossetia and Russia, contributing to increased tensions in the region.

The recognition by the Russian Federation of South Ossetia marked the beginning of the process of international support for our republic's independence. We are grateful to all countries that have joined Russia in supporting our new country and are confident that the continuation of this process will further enhance peace and security in the region.

Today's celebration of the second anniversary of this important historic event - our official recognition of independence by the Russian Federation - demonstrates our confidence that further rapprochement between the two countries and our people will be mutually beneficial for all.

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